COMIX WORLD NUMBER FIFTY! Copyright Clay Geerdes '76. World Rights Reserved. "The Nerds" are copyrighted by Gilbert Shelton & David Sheridan and appear through the courtesy of Rip Off Press. Subs are $3.50 for 12 issues, $6.50 for 24. 45 back issues for $7.25pp.

Q. How old is Comix World? A. First one was published in October, 1973. Q. What was the comix scene like at that time? A. It had peaked as far as quantities of ugs was concerned. The last big batch came out at the first ug con, April 20-22 at UC. The main publishers, Turner, Schenker, Donahue, Kitchen, Moriaty, all sat on a panel & talked about the shortage of paper and the effect the Supreme Court's decision re obscenity would have on the comix. It was partial truth. I think the paper trip was like the gas shortage, a way to double and triple the prices in a very short time. Worked, too. Higher prices on ugs may have effected sales more than the Supreme Court, but it's true that many small retailers around the country stopped carrying ugs because they didn't have the bread to fight the possibility of a bust and court trial. Q. How is the comix scene today? A. I think it's healthier than ever. All of the companies are trying to produce the best books they can and though fewer books come out in '76 as compared to 73 most people feel the quality of the art is appreciably higher. Q. A lot of people would like to drop the whole idea of ugs and let it die. How do you feel about that? A. Let it bleed. I'm aware of the current attitude of rejection toward anything sixties and those who bag the ugs there reject them along with acid and love beads. They're not fashionable. So when have comics of any kind ever been fashionable outside the comics community? Compared to the population at large, there are only a handful of us who care about comics at all. One of the things I have learned through the newsletter is that there is a new generation of young cartoonists and most of them refer to what they are doing as underground comix. As the look of their work is not the look of Shelton or Crumb or Spain, this means the term is being redefined. I think these neo-undergrounds are very much alive. The books are crude and printed in all sizes and shapes, but they show the kind of unrepressed creativity that typified the early ugs. If you're saying the term 'underground comix' means Crumb & Shelton to you and only them, then these new books are something else <u>to you</u>, but to the younger cartoonists who have come along in the wake of Shelton and Crumb and claimed the term as a definition of what they are doing you're wrong and they're right. Let me say this: The <u>word</u> underground isn't selling right now. The popular media doesn't want any part of it. Meanwhile, underground fandom is just beginning and the bulk of my 400 subscribers draw, write, and collect what <u>they</u> consider to be underground comix. Q. Where are most of your readers from? A. California, Texas, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, and Canada. Those who subscribe to the newsletter. Many more read the columns in the <u>Simpleton</u>, <u>Fandom Observer</u>. <u>Cobblestone</u>, & other places it runs. I often get letters from Denmark, Sweden, Amsterdam, Paris, London and other European places from people who saw the column in translation. What goes into CW is baslargely upon the readership. My ex-Bay Area readers are concerned, for example, about accuracy of addresses where they may get the comix. Local artists & other people I know rarely understand how critical CW is to the isolated fan in a small town. He has no access to a comic store stocked with 500 ug titles & must depend upon CW & other mail order information. CW is a <u>response</u>. A lot of young people write and draw and send their stuff to publishers and <u>never</u> get a reply. They can't learn anything about the comics game because no one will tell them. CW always replies & right away as many readers can tell you. Q. Sure, but <u>Comix World</u> is supposed to be about underground comix, and-- A. No, you're wrong. Comix World includes a lot of different aspects of contemporary society. I think of it as history in progress and I do not mind that it functions in various ways to assist cartoonists and collectors. Some people think of it as nothing more than advertising (which is vaguely negative to them), but there are different kinds of advertising. CW informs those who pay to be informed about what is happening in the comix and what is available to them. Very little hype (bullshit designed to sell something worthless) is included. Q. Come on, are you going to tell me you've never hyped the comix? A. Hell, no, but I don't do it in the newsletter. I sell the hype to the tabloids to get the money to print the newsletter. Q. Comix World has lasted a lot longer than the average fanzine-- A. CW isn't a fanzine. I'm not much of a fan. A fanzine is usually started out of love for some particular line of comics like the EC Fan Addict Bulletin or a particular artist like Frank Frazetta. CW is unlike any of the going zines, fan or pro, as a comparison will show you. It's my medium of expression and communication. I'm a teacher, writer, photographer, actor, organizer, what-have-you, and CW is the way I keep in touch with lots of different people and projects that interest me. My correspondants use it for their special interests as I do. It has a flow. It changes. If it didn't, I would have dropped it long ago. I'm human, just like you. I'm into the comics, but I'm also into theater and other things & all of it turns me on, keeps me excited about life. Q. Then CW will continue? A. CW is a book. Right now it's about 110 pages long. My secret project is a magazine. Q. Called COMIX WORLD? A. No, I have a different title, but it will include articles, art, and photography as CW does. Q. What do you see happening with the comix? A. They'll go on. A few will come out every year. The best of the new artists will find their in. We'll see some more anthologies, which serve to extend the readership into areas where the comix cannot. The guys who grind out superheroes like to talk about having a new audience every five years, well, that's true of ugs, too. Lots of switchers from Spidey to the Freak Brothers around these days. Q. The Freak Brothers really get around. I've seen them in a lot of papers lately. Has success changed Shelton any? A. Ask Shelton. Whenever I stop by Rip-Off Press, he's congenial. I don't see him as much of a game player. He and Sheridan and Richards have a together studio down at Rip Off. They enjoy their work. It's pleasant to go and visit there because they don't talk about money all the time the way a lot of artists do. They like comics. Q. You mean there are artists who don't like them? A. Sure, it isn't a lot different from any other line of work when the glamour wears off, and there are cartoonists around who make good money, but have little love for the art. You feel a lot different about something you <u>have</u> to do than you do about something you want to do. Comics are junk, dope, and they're the same to those who do them as those who read them. It's a rare cartoonist who doesn't have to grind out commercial gigs to support his comic art habit. Q. That's all our time, Clay. Anything else? A. Just totell everyone to watch out for WET SATIN, the women's sex fantasy comic, and for Rip-Off's Fat Freddy's Cat & Give Me Liberty, and for Krupp's KURTZMAN COMICS!

The RIP OFF COMIX PAGE

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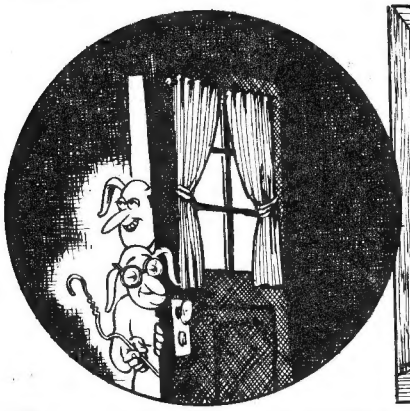

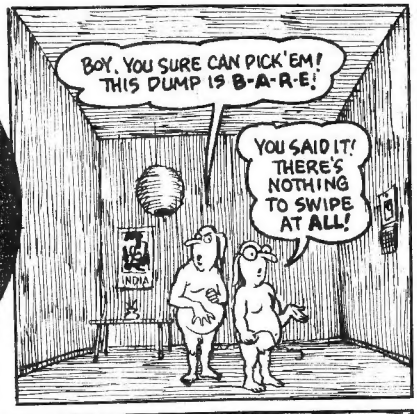

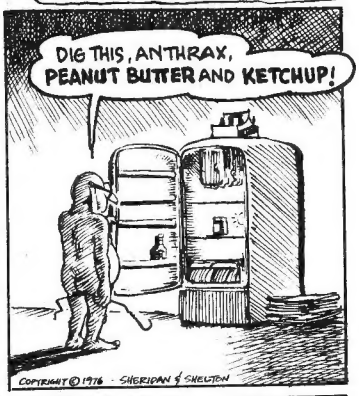

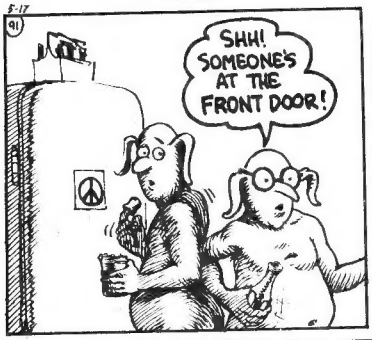

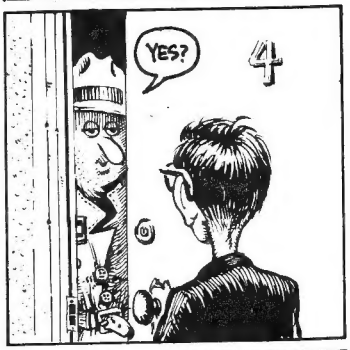

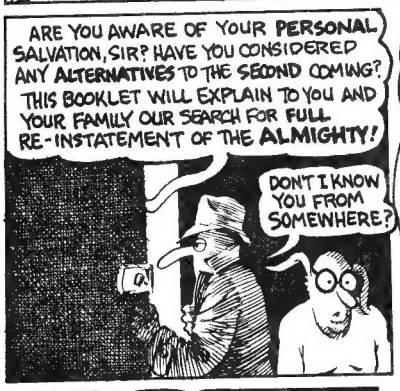
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POSSIBLY. JULIE AND I HAVE BEEN CANVASSING THIS AREA ALL WEEK!
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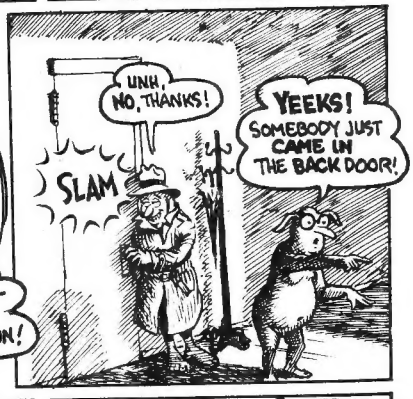
SECT? WHAT SECT? I'M DAVID EISENHOWER - FOR THE COMMITTEE TO RESTORE PRESIDENT NIXON!



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WHAT'S COBBLESTONE? It's a free tabloid, published by Mark Eliot, Phil Yeh, and Randy Kosht in Laguna Beach, Ca. Lately, it's become a good place for new artists to get exposure. The latest is #18 & I've excerpted a few samples here. If you want the entire paper & you will, send a contribution of 50 cents to Fragments West, P. O. Box 1128, Los Alamitos, Ca 90720. Rock Mother is a strip by California Comics artist, Will Meugniot. Phil Yeh Interviewed Harvey Kurtzman at the Berkeley Con & the photos in Cobblestone were done by Clay Geerdes and Michele Wozniak. Claudine Maugendre, one of the publishers of L'Echo Des Savannes, told Phil the story of the new French undergrounds and that's in

JAM: Any wise words on comic books—the way they're going now?

KURTZMAN: Wise words? Cut velvet. No, comic books have eternally gone through these cycles as long as I can remember and it's probably a law of nature, and in publishing, particularly uncontrolled. So they fall prey to this kind of phenomena where a bunch of guys are publishing all in violent competition and somebody finds the way and he sets up a leadership and everybody follows. He finds the vacuum and everything gets zipped into the vacuum and everybody tries to make it and they over-produce. They have to, that's a competitive impulse. Obviously they can't all survive because there aren't enough readers. So then they start dying down and obviously the fittest survive. Now, DC is very capable of survival because DC is a hydra-headed organization. They don't have to make money in the magazine department. If they make a profit distributing that's all they need. They've got a lot of strength. Right now Stan Lee has strength (in that) he has the best editorial approach, that's what everybody's buying. So he'll probably survive and also he's got a very swifty corporation. Marvel is part of a conglomerate—just a wing, a small part of a conglomerate. Another part of the natural cycle is when things are bad everybody starts reevaluating their old formulas and they try new ones and of course that's great because the earth gets turned over and you start growing new things. Very often that's what determines the survival of a company. DC has been trying new things now and coming up with something fresh and new.

#18, too. Phil's closing remark is to your right. As a lifetime opponent of all forms of censorship, I agree with Phil 100%.

For five dollars, you get a year of Cobblestone and you support what is becoming a very together paper. With 40,000 circulation, it's a worthwhile spot for you guys with stores and comix to sell to place an ad.* Give Me Liberty! has been published in comic & book format by Rip Off. A collector has to have both, right? The comic-75¢, the perfect bound ed-$3.50 & the address is P. O. Bx 14158, S. F., Ca 94114.* Rich Gamble says "ugs need proper marketing to reach the audience" and mentions Rolling Stone. Rich missed out on the color tab, The Funny Papers. Well, it's not like you think, Rich. If RS liked comix, they'd run some. Ads get rejected sometimes, because an ed-

America is celebrating its 200th birthday this year. A celebration that is based on the FREEDOMS our forefathers gave their lives to defend. One of these freedoms is the right to be able to print anything one wants. Perhaps when our Government remembers this, our own underground movement can grow as in France. And our talented artists can earn a decent living drawing comix that really show us life as it is so that we can perhaps correct the problems of our society, rather than suppress them.

MAY I COME IN? I'LL BE ONLY A FEW MINUTES!
KEITH! WE'VE BEEN WAITING TO HEAR FROM YOU!
I'D LIKE TO TALK TO YOU, VALERIE!
© ART SPIEGELMAN

Some interesting material in the Summer '76 issue of ARCADE. Continuing with his exploration of comic forms, Art Spiegelman has done a parody of Rex Morgan, M. D. called Nervous Rex, the Malpractice Suite and it is the strangest looking piece of art you're likely to see this year. Art's technique is to use a normal panel within a panel that is not at all normal, creating a lot of distortion. The inner panels are regular newspaper strip style, parts of bodies, standard expressions and gestures, word balloons, but Spiegelman extends and combines them in various ways which suggest the latent content. To take an analogy from psychoanalysis, one might see the ordinary panel as the manifest content, the consciously repressed everyday world, while the extended panel included the latent or unconscious content, those aspects of ourselves that are not public and do not appear in the daily strips. All things are distorted in the unconscious and to represent that realm of the psyche, Spiegelman distorts the anatomy of the characters. A humorous effect is created and it is a funny parody. Needless to say, it is not linear and to try to read this story is absurd. It is all taking place in the same moment of time. Interesting to see what the characters are doing with the rest of their bodies when all one sees is a hand holding a telephone receiver up to an ear & I'm sure this little parody will

HOWEVER, ALL THINGS CONSIDERED, CLASSICAL INTERPRETATIONS MUST NOW BE CLASSIFIED AS BEING VERY OBSOLETE.
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talk the way they would actually talk." Harvey is already into the 2d issue of Splendor. Last Gasp & Krupp will be carrying his books. He gets mail at Box 18471, Cleveland Hts., Ohio 44118.* * Sandy Cutlet says GUANO 1, 2, &3

DONALD DOGFLY HAS A PET PIRHANA WHICH HE KEEPS SECRETLY IN THE GARDEN SHED. THERE ARE OTHERS WHO WOULD LIKE TO OWN THIS FISH.....
DONALD DOGFLY AND THE PIRHANA

were published at U of Houston. He wants to know if they were tabs or books & what comic material they contained. Write c/o CW. *Seattle Simpleton 3 has a nice Shary Flenniken cover & it's 75¢pp from 4417 Fifth Av NE, Seattle, Wa 98105. All three issues still available.* * From England, ZOMIX COMIX, Hunt Emerson's solo book. He owes a lot to George Herriman & Bob Crumb. It's a likable and funny comic. Address Birmingham Arts Lab, 5 Tower Street, Birmingham B19 3UY ENGLAND. ZOMIX is Large Cow #5. Samples on this page are from the strip "Donald Dogfly and the Pirana." 24pp, 8x11" B/W, color cover.* My photo of Loretta & Shieka, two pregnant ladies with FREE STORE on their bellies appears in Aug HUSTLER. I didn't write the copy. Free Store has been suppressed by the Park Dept temporarily. C. G. 7-76